1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH5 Tehuelche SH5

Fitz-Roy (1839, 2:172) reported that the *Ilacaluf* traded pieces of iron pyrites, used for striking fire, to the *Tehuelche*. 372 [439]

SOCIAL LIFE

Marriage and the family.—Direct information is available only for the later *Tehuelche;* our chief information on the domestic culture of the later *Tehuelche* comes from Sánchez Labrador, Viedma, Fitz-Roy, Musters, and Spegazzini. 114

Premarital chastity was seemingly rather strictly observed by girls. They were free to choose their husbands. Fitz-Roy (1839, 2:152) reported that sometimes girls were betrothed while very young [child betrothal!]. Boys married around the age of 20; girls from 15 to 18 or so. The groom gave presents to the bride's father or parents; these presents were in some measure at least a bride-price; the father or parents of the bride also gave presents of equal value, which in case of later separation were the property of the bride (Musters, 1871, pp. 177–178; 1872, p. 201). The girl was brought by her father or the groom to the latter's toldo, where a wedding feast was given, including mares' meat. It was unlucky for any of the offal or meat of the mares to be eaten by the dogs. The shaman sang and gave advice at weddings. Residence was generally patrilocal. According to Viedma (1837 b, p. 74), a "cacique" always married the daughter or sister of another cacique. [836] 582 583 585 [771] 591

Marriage was mostly monogamous. Some men, however, had two wives; rarely three in the later 19th century but earlier some had "four, five, or even more" (Fitz-Roy, 1839, 2:152), and even five to eight (Sánchez Labrador, 1936, p. 73). No polyandry is reported (however, see *Poya*, p. 160); nor is either the ororate or levirate. 595

Wives were generally well-treated as well as loved. Wife beating was very rare. Adultery was not uncommon; in case of unfaithfulness on the part of a wife, her paramour suffered the penalty, not she (Viedma, 1837 b, p. 74). Divorce was uncommon, being usually sought by the wife. A man was not allowed to look toward his father-in-law when in conversation with him (Musters, 1871, p. 184). The aged were respected and well cared for. 593 837 586 606 [788]

Etiquette.—Proper names were not mentioned (Bourne, 1853, p. 180). Hospitality was the rule, to traveling strangers as well as to friends. Certain formalities were observed when two parties approached and came together, including answers to the host's questions before delivering a message (Musters, 1871, pp. 184–185). The relative absence of formalities on entering a tent (Moreno, 1879, p. 226) contrasted with *Araucanian* etiquette in this regard. [551] 576

Cleanliness of body was considered desirable, and bathing in the river was common; there was also a certain ideal of toldo cleanliness; 575 356

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
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The child, shortly after birth, is smeared over with damp gypsum. The mothers are able to travel on horseback the same or certainly the subsequent day, with the infant carried in a wicker cradle, and most tenderly cared for by both parents.

To every child in its infancy horses and gear are allotted, which are considered thenceforth as the personal property of the boy or girl, and cannot be resumed or disposed of by the parents. No ceremonial attends the naming a child, nor, as far as I could see, is there any fixed time for doing so. The names most commonly used are taken, I think, from places—from the place of birth. Patronymics or hereditary names—except in rare instances, which appeared to be imitations of Spanish usage—are unknown, but nicknames are universal, and parents are frequently known by the name of a child, which usurps the place of their own.

The boys soon learn the use of the weapons, and both boys and girls ride almost before they can walk: the sons rarely accompany the father to the chase before ten or twelve years of age, and do not join in fights till they are about sixteen years old, but there is no fixed period and no ceremonial to mark their admission to the state of manhood. The attainment of puberty by the girls is celebrated as described in page 80. From the age of nine or ten they are accustomed to help in household duties and manufactures, and about sixteen are eligible for the married life, though they often remain for several years spinsters. Marriages are always those of inclination, and if the damsel does not like the suitor for her hand, her parents never force her to comply with their wishes, although the match may be an advantageous one.

The usual custom is for the bridegroom, after he has secured the consent of his damsel, to send either a brother or an intimate friend to the parents, offering so many mares, horses, or silver ornaments for the bride. If the parents consider the match desirable, as soon after as circumstances will permit, the bridegroom, dressed in his best, and mounted

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
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on his best horse, decorated with silver ornaments—if he possesses any—proceeds to the toldo of his intended, and hands over the gifts. The parents of the bride then return gifts of an equal value, which, however, in the event of a separation (a rare event), become the property of the bride. After this the bride is escorted by the bridegroom to his toldo, amidst the cheers of his friends and the singing of the women. Mares are usually then slaughtered and eaten on the spot, great care being taken that the dogs do not touch any of the meat or offal, as it is considered unlucky. The head, backbone, tail, together with the heart and liver, are taken up to the top of a neighbouring hill, as an offering to the Gualichu, or evil spirit. An Indian is allowed to have as many wives as he can support, but it is rare to find a man with more than two, and they generally only have one.

On the death of a Tehuelche all his horses, dogs, and other animals are killed, his ponchos, ornaments, bolas, and all other personal belongings are placed in a heap and burned, the widow and other womankind keeping up a dismal wailing, and crying out loud in the most melancholy manner. The meat of the horses is distributed amongst the relations on both sides; and the widow, who cuts her hair short in front and assumes black paint, repairs, bag and baggage, to the toldo of her relations, or if she has none in the party, to the toldo of the chief.

The body is sewn up in a mantle, poncho, or coat of mail, if the deceased possessed one, and is taken away by some of the relations and buried in a sitting posture, its face to the east, a cairn of stones being erected over the place, varying in size according to the wealth and influence of the deceased. I have never seen any of the graves described in Mr. Wood's work, but as my travels as a rule were confined to the interior, they may exist in some part of the sea-coast; nor did the exhumation and removal of the body ever come under my notice, and I should be inclined to doubt its being ever practised by the Tehuelches, inasmuch as it is a rule amongst

3: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1872
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The same ceremonial is observed on the attainment of puberty by a girl. The important event is announced by her father to the cacique, who thereupon notifies it to the doctor. The girl herself is placed in the "pretty-house", and no one allowed to enter it. Marriages amongst the Tehuelches are always those of inclination, and if the damsel does not like the suitor to her hand, her parents never force her to comply with their wishes, although the match may be an advantageous one. The usual custom is for the bridegroom, after he has secured the consent of his damsel, to send either a brother or some intimate friend to the parents, offering so many mares, horses, or silver ornaments for the bride. If the parents consider the match desirable, as soon after as circumstances will permit, the bridegroom, dressed in his best, and mounted on his best horse, proceeds to the toldo of his intended, and hands over the gifts; the parents then return gifts of equivalent value, which, however, in the event of a separation, are the property of the bride. After this the bride is escorted by the bridegroom to his toldo, amongst the cheers of his friends, and the singing of the women. Mares are generally then slaughtered, and a feast takes place. The animals being killed, cooked, and eaten on the spot, great care being taken that the dogs do not touch any of the meat or offal, as it is considered unlucky. The head, backbone, and tail, together with the heart and liver, are taken up to the top of a neighbouring hill, as an offering to the "Gualychu", or evil spirit. An Indian is allowed to have as many wives as he can support. However, it is rare to find a man with more than two, and they more generally only have one.

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A curious custom prevails amongst these Indians with regard to their children. If a child hurts itself while playing, mares are slaughtered as a sort of thanksoffering that it did not die, a pretty

[i.e. as for a newborn child. — Analyst]

5: Bourne T-5 (1849) 1874
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peared to be a good deal excited, and kept up a continuous hum of rapid conversation. I looked and listened, with mingled curiosity and dread, while the chief repeated the same thing over and over again, in a firm, authoritative tone, tinged with anger. Unable to conjecture what was on foot, or to bear any longer the agony of suspense, I patted him familiarly on his naked breast, told him he had "a good heart," begged that he would not suffer the Indians to harm me. "You go sleep," was his answer; "no Indians come into this house to-night." I inquired what they were after, but no answer was vouchsafed, and he resumed his mysterious colloquy with the outsiders. The idea of sleeping under such circumstances was out of the question; I was wide awake, and bent on keeping so, — sorely bewildered at the strange goings on, and not a little terrified, but holding fast by my sole weapon of defence, and waiting a favorable opportunity to interpose another inquiry. The chief turned his head; and, perceiving my vigilance, repeated in an angry tone his injunction to sleep. This was a drop too much; and, clasping my arms about his dirty neck, patting his breast, and looking (with as confiding an air as I could assume) into his dull eyes, I begged him to speak to me, to tell me what these men wanted. "Do they want to break my head?"

"The men don't want to hurt you," he said; "Indian wants a girl for his wife; poor Indian, very poor, got no horses nor anything else. I won't give him the woman."

So speedy a descent from the height of my fears was not satisfactory; it was impossible to credit this explanation of such a formidable scene. I apprehended that it was a pure fiction, extemporised for the purpose of quieting me;

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
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583 but, as he seemed more communicative, I swallowed my
584 doubts, and questioned him further. "What does poor Indian say?"

"Says he 'll steal plenty horses when we get where they are, and give the woman plenty of grease. Says he is a good hunter, good thief."

These high titles to consideration did not seem to be admitted by the party they were offered to conciliate; on the contrary, the chief pronounced him a sleepy mink-skin of a fellow, — no thief at all; one that would never own a horse in the world. This opinion, which he was good enough to favor me with, he communicated to the party chiefly concerned, telling him that he was a poor, good-for-nothing Indian, he should not have the woman, and that was the end of it. After a little more jabber, and abundance of wrangling, the mob dispersed, much to my relief. Satisfied, by further conversation on the subject with old Parcsilver, whose triumph over the mutiny had put him into better temper than usual, that the affair did not imminently concern my safety or welfare, I lay down to rest.

582 In answer to further inquiries, — for I must plead guilty to a good deal of curiosity in respect of the poor Indian and his blasted hopes, — I was informed that without the chief's consent no marriage was permitted; that, in his judgment, no Indian who was not an accomplished rogue, — particularly in the horse-stealing line, — an expert hunter, able to provide plenty of meat and grease, was fit to have a wife on any terms. He never gave his consent for such lazy ones to take an extra rib; but, he very considerately added, all the difference it made was that some

invasion by his neighbors. As a matter of fact the unfortunate chief's family does not lose its right to its land, and with the passage of time it often happens that some descendant will re-establish the colony which his father, grandfather or brother destroyed either by bad luck or bad conduct. When a chief becomes old and unable to fulfill the obligations of his position he hands over his authority to a successor.

Marriages are made by a man's buying his wife from her father or from some other under whose guardianship she may be, and in proportion to her rank, good looks, conduct, etc. she is either more or less expensive. Her will is not taken into account for this transaction by her father or guardian, and she cannot set herself against her own sale. Each man may have one, two, or more wives of his own, depending on his wealth, but only rarely does a man have more than one unless he be a chief or an Indian of great power. Three is the greatest number of wives which any man gets to possess, and each husband has the right of selling his wives to another, but this resale makes the woman of little worth, and for that reason she is sold very cheaply; poor men only buy women in this way since they lack the funds to buy them first-hand. It is not considered improper to sell a woman to a relative, unless it be to the woman's son or brother, all other relatives being eligible as buyers. Many are the marriages of this type which are consumated because of the expense involved in procuring an unmarried woman. Single women, while they are yet young and have hopes of being married keep their virginity, but should these hopes vanish, they will have sex relations promiscuously. Those married women who find that the husband who bought them from their father or guardian is to their liking, are faithful, but should they not like their husbands they become troublesome -- yet adultery is not considered a crime unless committed in the husband's presence, and in such a case the adulterer and not the woman is blamed, and even then no punishment is meted out, the husband being easily mollified. The chief always has as a wife the daughter or sister of some other chief, and she is the head wife amongst his others, who must serve her in every way. Even if the chief should tire of his principal wife he may not sell her because it would be considered an insult and cause for an outbreak of war with her relatives. All these head wives are grave in demeanor, given to few words, live secluded in their tents, spend their time in pursuits suitable [74] to their position, and do not take part in the vain conversations of the other Indian women. The men never manhandle the women for any reason, except when drunk, and even in such a condition the chief will never strike his head wife although all the others may well receive their share of blows.